

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 002163

SIPDIS

FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROCCA FROM
AMBASSADOR WILLS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/21/2012

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [CE](#) [LTTE](#)

SUBJECT: WHAT THE PM WILL RAISE WITH YOU IN OSLO

Classified By: AMBASSADOR E. ASHLEY WILLS. REASONS 1.5 B, D.

1. (C) I saw PM Wickremesinghe three times this week, twice at social events and most recently today together with Deputy USTR Huntsman, who is here for the first official meeting on trade issues since the TIFA was signed in July. (Ambassador Huntsman's visit, by the way, is going extremely well, as we will report by septel.) On all three occasions, Ranil and I had brief exchanges about what he intends to raise with you in Oslo.

2. (C) Aggregating his responses, it seems he wants to thank you for your personal involvement in and support of his government's attempt to end the civil conflict through negotiations. It means a lot to him, he said, that you will be attending the Oslo meeting. He added that he would mention his appreciation of the various USG-sponsored assessments that have been carried out in recent months, in particular those involving the Peace Corps, USAID and Treasury programs and the three teams from DOD. In the latter connection, he said that peace is the target but his military's preparedness is a key factor in the equation as well. "We don't want to return to fighting, that's for sure, but the LTTE must perceive that our military is not weak." He elaborated that this is why US assistance to Sri Lanka's military forces, mainly in the form of training, education and other mil-mil contacts, is so important. He also expressed his hope that "modest" equipment sales -- mainly relating to maritime surveillance and interdiction -- would be forthcoming too.

3. (C) I replied that his agenda sounded fine to me, but added that I hoped he would not put too much emphasis on equipment sales. These might or might not be possible, I said, but it is clear that we see our greatest value added in the military field in mil-mil engagement programs relating to training and education. Bottom line: he probably will raise equipment sales with you but not forcefully, as it were.

4. (C) Ranil's mood is very positive as he approaches Oslo. He and his Cabinet colleagues have got our message that they should not have high expectation about the money likely to be pledged. The important thing, we and other donors here stressed, is our political support of the process. (Indeed, GL Peiris told the media 11/19 that the GSL never expected many new financial pledges at Oslo and that it now refers to the event not as a donors' conference but as a "peace support" one.)

5. (c) The GSL seems to be coming to the view that the LTTE means it this time. Various ministers I have spoken with lately have been somewhat less dubious about the Tigers' intentions. (GL Peiris is utterly convinced that the LTTE is for real, an enthusiasm that is not shared by his Cabinet colleagues, and that I too find unwarranted.) But they all stress how important it is for us and others in the international community to remain steadfast in reminding the LTTE that its behavior is being closely observed and that it has yet to be declarative in renouncing violence and the idea of Tamil Eelam and in embracing the idea of genuine democracy.

6. (C) In one of our brief exchanges this week, I asked Ranil what he thought of the PA's harsh statement last week alleging bias on the part of the Norwegians and softness on the part of the US and the UK regarding the LTTE. He replied that it showed just how unhappy President Kumaratunga is about the positive trend of events. He did not reckon that the statement would have a major impact or that it meant that the PA could not be worked with. In this regard, he said he will brief the President privately when he returns from Oslo.

WILLS